THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • THURSDAY • DECEMBER 07, 2023 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

READ SHARE FOLLOW
newindianexpress.com
facebook.com/thenewindianxpress twitter.com/newindianxpress
instagram.com/newindianexpress

100+ WEBSITES BLOCKED FOR AIDING ILLEGAL INVESTMENTS, JOB FRAUDS

The Union home ministry said over 100 websites operating from abroad have been blocked as they were into illegal investments and job frauds

RETD WORKERS, WOMEN, JOBLESS ARE TARGETS

These frauds typically involve targeted digital advertisements using keywords like *ghar baithe job* (work from home) and *ghar baithe kamai kaise karen* (how to earn while sitting at home) in multiple languages. The targets are often retired employees, women and unemployed youth seeking part-time jobs, an official spokesperson of the ministry said

PEOPLE WERE LURED WITH COMMISSIONS

- Fraudsters get in touch with victims through apps like WhatsApp or Telegram and convince them to perform simple tasks such as liking and subscribing to videos or rating maps
- Victims are given a commission, then persuaded to invest for higher returns. When they do, their deposits are frozen, resulting in ripoff

Crypto

CURRENCY ONE ROUTE TO LAUNDER THE GENERATED ILLEGAL MONEY OUT OF INDIA

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Wait gets longer for BJP CMs call

Shah meets Modi, but no final word yet

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

THREE days after winning the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan with comfortable majority, the Bharatiya Janata Party is yet to take a call on who will be the chief ministers of these states.

On Wednesday, Union home minister Amit Shah and BJP president J P Nadda met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the names of chief ministers. Sources said the meeting went on for hours but no decision was taken. This was the second meeting between BJP's central leadership and the Prime Minister in the past 24 hours. The first meeting, held on Tuesday, was inconclusive.

Sources said that discussions were also held on the appointment of observers for MP, Rajashthan and Chhattisgarh legislative party meetings, which are likely to be held soon for the selection of their respective CMs.

Wednesday's meeting was held in the wake of resignation of 10 MPs, including two Union ministers, who had successfully contested the assembly elections. They submitted their resignations after meeting the PM in Parliament, triggering speculation that some of them were being considered for the CM's post, as the BJP prefers new faces in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan to lead development ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

However, a senior BJP leader told this newspaper that the party may stick to old leaders if there is no consensus within the party on new faces. "It is anticipated the PM and other leaders may go with new faces in the three states. However, if there is no consensus, then the old faces may continue in each state till the 2024 general elections," he said.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Vasundhara Raje

Raman Singh

Among the new names doing the rounds are Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, Vasundhara Raje, Mahant Balaknath, and Union railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for Rajasthan.

Narendra Singh Tomar, who resigned on Wednesday as Union agriculture minister, Prahlad Singh Patel, who resigned as MoS for food procession, and Union civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia are in the race.

As for Chhattisgarh, former chief minister Raman Singh and O P Chaudhary are being considered for the top post, according to BJP sources.

As Kavita Lankesh, Gauri's sister, requested the government to form a special court with a permanent judge to hear the murder case, I have issued an order in this direction

Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

Spl court to try Gauri, Kalburgi murder cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Belagavi

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday issued an order to set up a special court for a fast-track trial of journalist Gauri Lankesh and litterateur MM Kalburgi murder cases.

In his order, Siddaramaiah said that a special investigating team was formed to probe the murder of Gauri Lankesh.

Gauri Lankesh was murdered on September 5, 2017. So far, 18 people have been arrested and a chargesheet filed. The trial is moving at a slow pace.

"As Kavita Lankesh, Gauri's sister, requested the state government to form a special court with a permanent judge to hear the murder case, I have issued an order in this direction," the chief minister said.

In another order, Siddaramaiah said Kalburgi was murdered on August 31, 2015. A chargesheet was filed during 2018-19. Although questioning of the family members of Kalburgi is over, proceedings in the court are on. Kalburgi's wife Umadevi M Kalburgi requested the government to form a special court to hear the murder case. An order has been issued in this regard, Siddaramaiah said.

Prof Kalburgi was shot dead by two persons at his house.

GAURI WAS SHOT DEAD BY THREE ASSAILANTS

Journalist Gauri Lankesh was shot dead on September 5, 2017, by three assailants as she was entering her house around 8pm in Bengaluru.

LS passes bills to raise J&K seats, provide quota

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

THE J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill 2023, which proposed to increase the number of seats in the assembly from 83 to 90, was passed in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. The Bill seeking to nominate two members from the Kashmiri migrants, one representing PoK refugees and one woman to the assembly was introduced in July.

Migrants are those who migrated from the Kashmir Valley or any other part of J&K after November 1, 1989 due to terror. The bill also reserves seven seats for SCs and nine for STs. Another Bill — the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill 2023 — was also passed after six hours of debate.

"Earlier, there were 37 seats in Jammu, now there are 43. Earlier there were 46 in Kashmir, now there are 47 and in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), 24 seats have been reserved since PoK is ours," Union home minister Amit Shah said in his reply to the debate in the Lok Sabha.

He blamed first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru for the 'sufferings' of people in Kashmir. Shah said Nehru made two blunders — announcing a ceasefire when our forces were winning against Pakistani invaders; and taking the Kashmir issue to the UN.

"There were two blunders during the Nehru reign because of which Kashmir had to suffer. Our Army was winning but as they reached areas in Punjab, ceasefire was announced and PoK came into being. Had there been no truce, PoK would have been part of Bharat," said Shah. Shah's remarks on Nehru triggered an Opposition uproar and a walkout but they returned later. "So much land of this country was lost, it was a historic blunder," the home minister added.

Shah said in a way, three wars had happened in Kashmir. Pakistan attacked Kashmir in 1947. "A total of 41,844 families were displaced during three wars in 1947, 1965 and 1969. This bill is an attempt to give rights to those people, to give representation to those people," he said.

MOITRA

REPORT IN LS ON FRIDAY

The report of the Ethics Committee on the expulsion of Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra from the Lok Sabha is expected to be tabled in the House on Friday | P9

CM orders probe into Arjuna's death

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday directed the forest department to conduct an investigation into the death of Arjuna, the elephant which carried the Dasara howdah for eight years.

Arjuna died after it was attacked by a wild elephant in the forests of Hassan district on Monday.

Sources in the Chief Minister's Office said that Siddaramaiah directed the officials of the department to probe the allegations over the death of Arjuna.

The chief minister sought details regarding the death of Arjuna and asked the officials to complete the investigation at the earliest, the sources added.

Several experts and environmental activists have alleged that Arjuna suffered bullet injuries during the operation to capture the wild elephant. P5

No ration cards: Transgenders deprived of Siddu's guarantees

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

GANGA, 42, a transgender from Ballari, was delighted when the Gruha Lakshmi scheme was launched in the State in August. "With Rs 2,000 a month from Gruha Lakshmi and Rs 800 from Maithree (pension scheme for transgenders), I thought I could pay my house rent. But this did not happen," she said.

Ganga ran from pillar to post to get the benefits of these schemes, but in vain. Explaining her ordeal, Ganga said she went to an Internet centre to apply for the benefit under the Gruha Lakshmi scheme. "The government portal asked me to upload my ration card. That's when I applied for a ration card. But that portal has only two options -- male and female. I don't belong to these categories," she said.

Later, she visited the Food and Civil Supplies Department's office where the officials told her that a ration card cannot be issued to a single person. Her parents live in a separate house and they have a ration card. "I was thrown out of my house, I don't have a family now. Officials ruled out giving me a ration card," she said.

Earlier, there were many instances of all members of a single family getting individual ration cards in their names to avail more benefits. Such individual cards have been eliminated. This could be the reason for the department not issuing a single card, T Krishnappa of the Fair Price Shop Dealers' Association said.

Sheetal from Chikkamagaluru said without a ration card number one cannot apply for the Gruha Lakshmi scheme. In Chikkamagaluru, there are 350 transgenders, but only two have houses and they are getting the scheme's benefit as they live with their families.

According to Nisha Gulur, programme director of Sangama, there is a provision for the community members to get Transgender cards. Showing this card, transgenders can travel for free in government-run buses under the Shakti scheme. In Karnataka, only 2,000 members have Transgender cards. "Our NGO is helping transgenders to get such cards. The government should help the transgender community to enjoy the benefits of welfare schemes," Nisha said. The government should conduct a census of transgenders, she said.

Lakshmi from Hosapete said the Shakti scheme is not applicable to transgenders. "We have been given Trangender cards. But bus conductors say their ticketing machines have no provision to note the Transgender card numbers to issue free tickets," she added. P5

TOWARDS HIGHER GROUND

Residents of Kondithope Police Quarters being shifted to a safe place on a raft, after their houses were flooded following incessant rains in Chennai on Wednesday | P JAWAHAR | P5

92 residential school students died by suicide in 5 yrs

PRAMODKUMAR VAIDYA @ Belagavi

NINETY-two students have died in schools and colleges run by the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) in the last five years. Of them, 29 committed suicide, according to the interim report for 2023-24 submitted by the Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare Committee of the State Legislature.

The report tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday stated that some students died under mysterious circumstances while returning home.

Stressing the need for detailed investigations into such deaths, the committee recommended to the government to seek information from parents whether the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement had conducted any investigation. If no investigation was conducted, the government should initiate action as per law, it stated.

The committee also recommended to the government to hold special counselling sessions for students, parents and teachers to prevent such suicide cases.

The committee favoured setting up a system to ensure proper utilisation and evaluation of funds meant for the development of SCs and STs. A sum of Rs 2.5 lakh crore has been spent on 1.8 crore SCs and STs under the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan (Planning, Allocation and Utilisation of Financial Resources) Act since 2013. The Act mandates spending 24.5% of the State's budget on SCs and STs.

Stressing the need to know whether the benefits reached these communities, the committee stated that the government should evolve a mechanism for the purpose.

Seek information from parents whether the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement had conducted any investigation. If no investigation was conducted, the government should initiate action as per law

Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare Committee of the State Legislature

NOT REEL LIFE

For these Ballari girl students, theatre is their paatshala

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR @ Ballari

ONCE a film theatre is now a government residential school for girls at Kurugodu town in Ballari district.

The Backward Classes Welfare Department started the residential school from Classes 6 to 10 three years ago. The residential school has 226 girls.

Earlier, the school was run from a small building. When the number of students increased, the school management committee started looking for a big building.

The members of the committee finally zeroed in on the film theatre which was closed five years ago.

Children at the government residential school have been learning and staying at the film theatre in Kurugodu town for the last three years | EXPRESS

Though the committee identified a site to construct a school building, no help came from the government, some teachers of the school alleged.

Basavaraj M, a social activist and resident of Kurugodu, said the children are forced to reside and study in the old film theatre.

Earlier, the school was run from a small old building. When the students' parents staged a protest, they were promised that the school would be shifted to a new building. But instead of moving to a new building, the committee members chose the old theatre.

"The government is paying Rs 1.20 lakh a year as rent to the owner of the theatre. Two or three classes are held simultaneously, causing confusion among the students. There is no playground and students play near the main road," he said.

Basavaraj said, "We gave several memorandums, but the officials concerned did nothing to shift the school to a big building. Some parents shifted their children to other schools."

A senior official from the department said four acres of land has been sanctioned to construct a school building on the outskirts of Kurugodu town.

An official from the Karnataka Residential Educational Institutional Society (KREIS) said that the school will have its own building soon.

EXPRESS READ

Revanth meets top Cong leaders in Delhi

New Delhi: Telangana Chief Minister-elect Revanth Reddy met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge here on Wednesday, a day after he was elected leader of the Congress Legislature Party. He later called on Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, former party chief Rahul Gandhi, and and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Reddy, who has been elected from the Kodangal Assembly seat, is slated to take oath as chief minister in Hyderabad on Thursday, at 1 pm on Thursday | P5

SpiceJet flight delayed by 14.5 hrs, pax furious

Bengaluru: Anger spilled over from passengers of a SpiceJet flight from Bengaluru to Mumbai at the Kempegowda International Airport on Wednesday, after their flight got delayed by 14.5 hours due to non-availability of critical equipment and the shift hours of the crew getting over | P2

In Insta post, Ratan Tata flags fake interview

New Delhi: Former Tata Group chairman Ratan Tata on Wednesday issued a "fake" alert for misusing his name on social media to "exaggerate investment" with risk-free and 100 per cent guarantee. In a post on Instagram, Tata called out a post from a user by the name of Sona Agrawal.